

Asking for help when we are struggling with our health.



Asking for help is not a sign of weakness. Talking to someone or asking for help is a strong and courageous thing to do – it means you are confronting a problem and taking control of your life.

Know who to ask:

Think about who you would like to talk to:

- **Do you want it to be somebody you know?**
- **Do you trust them?**
- **Who might they tell?**
- **Do you think they will be able to help?**

If you have someone in mind that you can trust and you feel comfortable with, then show your trust in them. Remember if you had a physical injury you



would probably not hesitate in asking for help.

Think about what you would do if someone asked you for help. If you do not know anyone you think could help, if you think you need specialist support, or if you feel you want to speak to someone who does not know you, there are so many organisations

and people who are ready and waiting to help you. They could be your doctor, a therapist, an advisor with specific knowledge and expertise. Remember that they are waiting for individuals to make contact and are there to support and help us all.

There are many trained and experienced professionals you can speak to in a safe and secure environment. Their ability to offer a confidential consultation



face to face, online or on the telephone is assured.

This means that you can talk to them about anything without feeling judged and they will not tell anyone else about your asking for help. They may talk to other professionals if they need advice. Many professionals will only tell someone else if

they think you or someone else is at serious risk of harm, and in this case they will only tell someone to try and help, and they will always try to talk to you about this first. You can ask any professional to explain their confidentiality policy before you talk to them.



Have a look at the services available in your area. You can contact whoever feels right for you. You can ask your doctor for help. They will be able to direct you to the right place and the right people. Use the internet and search for IAPT services. IAPT stands for Improving Access to Psychological Therapies. There will be at

least one in your local area. Call us and we will be able to guide you.

Taking the First Step



If you want to talk to someone but you are worried that you will not be able to talk to them or that you will not be able to explain your concerns or worries, try telling yourself how you feel and what it is you want to share. You can also refer yourself to a Talking Therapies Service.

Many of them will have an online referral

gateway. This means that you can write a description of how you are feeling and why you would like to talk, and they will call you. This can sometimes make things a little bit easier.

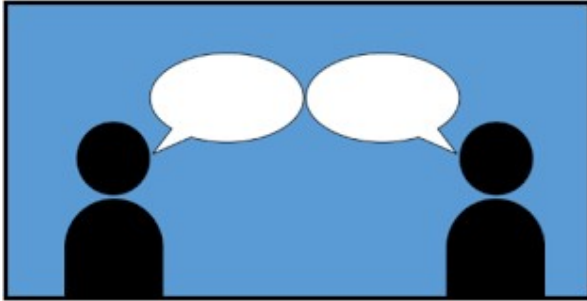
Sharing

Don't worry if it takes a few goes to say what you are feeling / what you need. The people at the service know it can be difficult to talk and ask for help (they



probably must do it themselves from time to time). They will not be offended if you run away / hang up / cannot speak immediately. They will just hope you come back and get the support you need. Do not worry. Congratulate yourself for trying and then try again when you feel you can.

If you are talking to friends, family, or carers, give people the time to react and think.



Remember that you have had a while to think about your problem. The first few things a person might say or ask may seem silly or get your back up. However, if you give them a bit of time to think about what you have said and try to answer their questions, they might

be able to come up with something sensible to help.

People might say unhelpful things like “it’s just a phase”, “you’re attention seeking” or “just get over it”. This means they do not understand the issue, so they may not be the best people to ask for help on this occasion. Just because someone says these things it does not mean they are true.

Sometimes people might say something you do not want to hear, whether it be right or wrong, so it can help to prepare for this. Often people just want to help.

If the person you chose cannot help, try to identify another person who will be able to listen, understand and support you well.

Whatever is going on is not who you are

*You
Decide
Who You Are*

Whatever is happening, the best way to make sure it doesn’t overtake your life and weigh you down is to talk to someone and get the support you need.

Asking for help initially can involve thinking or talking about the problem and dealing with the feelings of talking about it.

Dependant on the problem, you may need to attend some appointments, or manage people’s reactions, but once some help is set

up, or the problem is sorted, you can focus on all the other things in your life.

Talking to someone or getting help for a mental health problem does not necessarily mean medication or counselling. There are all kinds of treatment for different conditions and there are often choices to discuss to see what will work best and most simply for you.

Getting help, helps you to manage the problem as quickly as possible, meaning you are free to get on and live life.